GT 1/7/93

POLICE

Bizarre details of attack on therapist puzzle police

Religious slogans spray-painted on walls

By **Louis Aguilar**
Gazette Telegraph

A psychotherapist has reported to police that she was attacked in her office Saturday by an assailant who spray-painted religious slogans on the walls and jabbed a civil liberties newsletter onto a door with a knife.

The 48-year-old woman, Ruth Williams of Black Forest, said she was knocked out and tear-gassed and her office in the 500 block of East Uintah Street was ransacked at about 6:30 that morning. She was treated at Penrose Hospital for head trauma and an eye injury, a hospital spokeswoman said.

Police say the incident is one of the strangest assaults they've handled in recent years and are puzzled about aspects of the case. While it remains a first-degree burglary investigation, the case has been assigned to the Major Crimes Unit to explore whether the crime was politically motivated. Police say they will review the evidence and interview Williams again.

The reported assault has come at a time of heightened tension between conservative religious groups and liberal civil rights groups. Two of those civil rights groups, Ground Zero and Citizens Project, suggested this week that the incident may be an example of a growing intolerance of differing political views.

However, the victim, herself a member of Citizens Project, is reluctant to connect the assault to city politics.

The psychotherapist said in an interview that she routinely goes to her office early on Saturdays to catch up on paperwork. On this particular Saturday, she had been in the office for about 10 minutes when someone came up from behind and hit her over the head with a vase. She speculates that her assailant may have entered the office through an unlocked back door; police found no signs of forced entry.

When Williams regained consciousness, she was lying on the floor with a pepper-type tear gas sprayed in her eyes and in her shoes, she told police.

There was a minor scratch in the shape of a cross on the back of her left hand, and a similar shape had been cut into the back of her jacket and blouse, Williams said.

Preliminary police reports don't mention either the scratch or the cross cut into the clothes, but the victim's sister, Dorothy Williams, said the scratch was "so minor" that it may have been overlooked by police and the hospital. Ruth Williams said she can't recall if she told police about the scratch.

Police spokesman Sgt. David Moore said Wednesday it is not uncommon for victims to leave out details of the crime in the initial interview with police. "It's just very sketchy right now," Moore said. "We definitely need to reinterview her."

The police report does indicate the office had been ransacked, with bookshelves, a plant and furniture overturned. On a wall and two doors were foot-tall phrases in red spray paint: "Seek God," "Repent" and "Stop Evil."

Stuck to an interior door by a kitchen knife was a copy of the Freedom Watch newsletter. The newsletter is produced by Citizens Project, a group formed to monitor the religious right in the city.

Williams said she also discovered money had been taken out of her wallet and that a bumper sticker on the rear

See **ASSAULT**/B3

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Woman sentenced for sex

Associated Press

BOULDER — A Boulder woman has been sentenced to eight years in prison for having sex with one of her young sons and forcing him and her other children to have sex with strangers and friends.

At her sentencing Tuesday in Boulder District Court, Patricia Ballard faced three of her children and said, "I'm sorry."

Judge Morris Sandstead Jr. imposed the eight-year sentence, the maximum under a plea bargain reached by the woman.

He also ordered an estimate of how much restitution the 33-year-old woman should be required to pay for therapy for her children, noting it "should exceed a half-million dollars."

Ballard, her husband, Michael, and their former neighbors, Dennis and Marcia Dunann, were charged in April with crimes against the Ballard children — two girls and five boys

Weather service issues winter-storm watch for southwestern and central mountains

Associated Press

The southwestern part of the state will be the area of Colorado hardest hit by a storm moving through from the California coast, according to the National Weather Service.

Forecasters on Wednesday issued a winter-storm watch for the southwest mountains and portions of the central mountains through today. More than a foot of snow was expected in some areas.

Powderhorn Ski Area near Grand Junction reported 2 inches of snow by noon Wednesday, and the weather service said the storm was expected to intensify.

Heavy snow was expected over the central mountains — mainly west of Leadville — and in the southern mountains.

Because of the storm, road conditions in the high country were expected to deteriorate overnight, and travelers were urged to use caution.

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From B1

of her car that said "Celebrate Diversity" had been covered in red spray paint.

The initial police report noted that the back of her car had been spray-painted but didn't mention the bumper sticker.

"This is definitely the strangest assault in a while," Moore said.

"I don't know of other cases where we had these sort of symbols — the religious stuff and the newsletter," Moore said.

Williams said she is at "a complete loss as to why this has happened."

"I have had a practice in Colorado Springs since 1974, and I've never had any problems until this," she said.

Although she is a member of Citizens Project, Williams is not very active, said the group's co-coordinator, Amy Divine.

"I checked our mailing list, and she's on it," Divine said. "But that seems to be the extent of her involvement with us.

"Obviously, we can't really say why it happened," Divine said. "But, you know, there is a growing fear of intolerance and divisiveness in this city. This will certainly heighten that atmosphere."

Citizens Project began giving out the "Celebrate Diversity" bumper stickers in mid-December and since has heard of two incidents in which the stickers were torn off cars, Divine said.

Williams, however, is reluctant to say the crime may have been politically motivated.

"That's a leap of reason," she said.

"I mean, just in terms of evidence, no one can really say why it happened. Also, I'm not really willing to become anyone's symbol of heightened fear or hate. I just want to return to my normal life."

Jan. 6, 1993	
D - J Industrials	3,305.16
Nationwide volume	361,302,020
Issues traded	
Up 1,091 Down	780
Unchanged	578
NYSE Index	239.15
Down	0.10
S&P Index	434.52
Up	0.18
American Index	397.60
Up	0.29
NASDAQ Index	681.85
Up	7.51

Source: Associated Press

United Airlines said it will lay off 2,800 employees, cut executive salaries by 5 percent and seek union concessions in the latest round of cutbacks in the money-losing airline industry.

United also announced a hiring freeze and said it will reduce its domestic schedule and cancel plans for some new international routes. The job cuts amount to 3.3 percent of United's 83,600 employees.

Denver radio stations sold

A Chicago broadcasting company purchased two Denver radio stations — KOSI-FM and KEZW-AM — as part of its effort to expand operations.

The Denver stations, purchased by Tribune Broadcasting, will retain their current formats — adult contemporary at KOSI and nostalgia at KEZW.

Free tax workshop offered

The Internal Revenue Service, Colorado Revenue Department and U.S. Small Business Administration are sponsoring a business tax work-

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